

THE EUROPEAN HARVEST FIELD

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. . . . She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. . . . She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. . . . Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

—Proverbs 31. 10, 20, 26, 31.



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No. 1

JANUARY - FEBRUARY

1948

(Formerly located at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.)

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for Christian Oneness and Evangelization

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CATHERINE RUTH SMITH, Editor

A Magnificent Life

In these strenuous days of world-wide unrest, we feel our need of spiritual refreshment. The testimony of some powerful worker for God, who knows the pitfalls of popularity, is often a source of encouragement and strength to our weary souls.

This is what I soon discovered on reading Dr. Arno C. Gaebelein's book, "Half a Century." It is a volume different from most tales of personal experience. It is decidedly original.

First one is impressed with the life of one who knew God's Word and went deep down into its golden treasures. He was a faithful teacher who found in Christ the satisfying, sustaining and all-sufficient Friend. This is a great gift to possess and use for God. I refer to Dr. Gaebelein's testimony to the marvellous grace which often caused him to worship in the dust of humiliation and adoration.

Some people used to imagine that he specialized in exposing error, and was a stern critic. Let such persons read this book. They will discover that their judgment has been perverted. He was a saint of a robust, practical, and devoted type.

I shall read this book frequently. It needs quiet meditation, and will repay all who seek a deeper unfolding of the Love of Christ. Oh, that missionaries far and wide could have a copy! is my heartfelt wish. The world needs more men like this Spirit-filled Bible champion, a true lover of the Word of God!

The American-European Fellowship surely misses such a valuable friend and guide. Norman J. Smith felt that he was God's precious and blessed gift to the Fellowship. Our prayers will often rise to the throne of God, for we know that "he, being dead, yet speaketh," and we hope that we may follow in his train to the glory of God, and for the salvation of precious souls.

Eldon House, Croydon, England.

F. SPENCER JOHNSON.

Have you, our readers, been stirred lately by a great book, a poem, a prayer, a motto, or a Bible verse that seemed to come to you with new meaning? If so, won't you tell us about it the next time you write, that we may share your experience, and perhaps pass it on to others?

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The Need of the Month — France



TORDIS CHRISTOFFERSEN

How great the need of France is, must be apparent to anyone who reads the newspapers today, for each edition brings fresh news of strikes, outbreaks of violence, currency reforms, etc. Accordingly, it is most appropriate that we should consider that land at this time. But we would direct your thoughts to our own special worker for the Lord in France — Tordis Christoffersen. We asked our sister to prepare a sketch of her life and work, for this issue of THE EUROPEAN HARVEST FIELD. Promptly and generously, she gave of her time and effort to write the story; but with characteristic modesty she spoke only of the work, and hardly mentioned herself at all. We must therefore ask you to read her words against the background which most of you know — her going forth as our missionary, her work with the

Jewish children at our fresh-air home in Radost, Poland (the accompanying photograph dates from that time), and then the harrowing experiences of the second World War. During those years we strenuously sought to maintain contact with her, and to minister to her needs. But eventually all touch was lost. Then, after a long and agonizing period of silence, came a radiogram from her, and communications were restored. Brother Stettler, in neutral Switzerland, had also lent his kind offices as intermediary, here as in many other instances.

So our sister was rediscovered in the south of France, ill, exhausted, and in want of the bare necessities of life. Even then, her one thought was to serve others, and to proclaim salvation to them. Since that time, it has been a blessed privilege to minister to her, that she in turn might minister. She has been through experiences of unspeakable horror, yet she remains faithful, smiling, her heart filled with prayer and praise.

"Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me." My dear praying friends:

I was asked to tell the story from the beginning, but as I have so much to share with you, I shall pass lightly over my childhood and first youth. I can see the hand of the Lord in it. How often have I thanked Him for the providential grace of being born among the green fields of Denmark, and not in the Ghetto of Warsaw!

I grew up under the shadows of the Free Church, and went to a school belonging to it. My special training, that of Swedish medical gymnastic and massage, with an additional nursing course, fitted me to earn my bread anywhere. The many journeys with rich, cultured ladies, throughout Europe, had their meaning in the light of the whole.

During the early years of the first World War, I was thoroughly converted in the small Danish chapel in Berlin. The conviction of sin was real. I travelled far and wide to make my confession, I remember, to my dearest

friends, who thought so highly of me; it was a deep humiliation, but afterward the peace of God filled my heart, and ever since, my desire has been to the Lord, to live and move in Him, and in the revelation of His Word. "Study to show thyself approved unto God."

Never shall I cease to praise the Lord for the great days and years spent in your blessed country, the wealth of Biblical knowledge that I acquired at Hephzibah House and Biola, the deep meaning of Calvary and spiritual warfare, the fellowship, at His feet, with some of His choicest saints, which has continued ever since, and is my greatest treasure on earth, for out of it has grown all the rest. And in His Name I thank every one of you, who have followed us until this day with prayer and help. The wonder of it can only be measured in the hollow of His hand, and will be revealed in that day.

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee . . . to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know thee, what was in thy heart." The years in Poland were changing and challenging. I was a Dane, and trusted everybody — as we poor Danes do — and I paid heavily for this. But, in spite of me, the Finger of the Lord wrote the Living Word on many Jewish hearts; and it is a great comfort to hear, from escaped Jews, how the little children, and many others who had heard the Gospel at Radost, testified unto the very last, even unto the gas-chamber, to salvation by faith in the Lord.

There was little Maicha — so true, that an American pastor could say of her that she was the most Christlike child he ever saw. A host of children come before me: Moses, who always called "Villa Bethel" our home; Samuel, whose favorite song was, "Hallelujah, what a Saviour!" and little six-year-old Elka, who sat on the stairs in one of the darkest corners of the Ghetto and sang: "I am bought, but not with silver"; David, who, after much setting right of things, could kneel with me and praise the Lord for the assurance in his heart that his name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Abraham and Sarah, two poor children with no roof over their heads, and a gnawing hunger, said: "Our needs are so great that only God can help us." And once, in a crowded attic, when we talked about the feeding of the five thousand, another Moses spoke up, declaring that he knew that sin was the reason for their poverty: he had heard about this in Ogradova Hall, and his prayer was truly from the heart, as he claimed the cleansing blood for his own and his mother's hearts, and asked that the Lord would give bread.

Then the deeply devoted Tosia — I can recall, when her sister was run down by an auto, that Tosia said: "Oh, that it had been me instead, for I know the Lord and the way." She suffered violence, was cut and bruised for her faith in the Lord. All these, and many others, died in faith. Rachmuhl, our own son in the faith, is preparing for better service, in a training college in England. And dear Ester — in reading her last letter, you will marvel at God's grace and power. Your prayers for abiding fruit have been answered.

"Camp Belsen, December 18, 1947 (translated from the Yiddish). Dear Mother: Thank you very much for your dear letter. Our Heavenly Father has preserved us for another year, and it will soon be Christmas, the most wonderful day, which reminds us of the birth of Jesus. 'Daughter of Zion, rejoice!' Oh, there are only so few who rejoice, although God wants to visit all men with His peace. Every year at Christmas I must think so much of Alleia Jerusalemsha (our mission home): there, in the year 1936, I gave my heart to the Lord. Praise His Name, He has never disappointed me. Always, when something was very hard, He made it easy. He has always given me peace. Oh, my dear, I remember the day when many Gestapo and S. S. men stood in front of me, with guns and bayonets in their hands, asking me who I was. I answered quietly, 'I am a Christian: I believe that Jesus is my

Messiah and my Saviour." Then they sent me to Auschwitz. All, all is God's wonder. Do you remember the hymn: "Yes, I believe God answers prayer"? How good it is to know this! What a Lord we have, whom we can trust, and whose great grace we experience over and over. God has called me; I hear His sweet voice and follow Him. I have a hymn-book, and am so happy about it. Would like so much to have Christmas with some of God's children — but I accept His will also in this. Each one must shine in the corner where God has placed him. My dear mother, I wish you much happiness and God's richest blessing on Christmas Day. My husband sends his heartiest greeting, and my little boy kisses you. And I remain forever yours through God's love, Ester."

"Distress of nations — wars, rumors of wars." Looking back over the nine years of service in France, with actual war, with persecution of Israel, with anguish, sorrows and suffering such as no words can tell, I see that over all the days, up to this present hour, could be written such words as: Perplexity, fainting, fear, desolation, pestilence, hunger and nakedness. Through your newspapers and radio, you know about the latest crises, when all the utility services of daily living stopped — post, tram and train, water, gas and light. There was crying in the streets. I thought of the day when this shall be no more, for here we hear these cries, these demonstrations, even open fighting. Jeremiah, in his hard and dark days, went in and sat before the Lord. He wondered, and so did we: but Jeremiah uttered these words, "Lord God, thou knowest," and we are glad too that He does know. Yet I will rejoice — will rejoice in the Lord God of my salvation.

"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Jean Pierre and Françoise represent to you all the little children of France, with their great needs. Only children under five years of age have milk, in Paris, and even so there is not enough. Jean Pierre is a bright, beautiful boy. He learns the Word of God with great attentiveness and facility. He knows that all sin, with its consequences, came from disobedience, and that sanctification comes when one prepares the heart to do the will of God. You should hear this seven-year-old boy quote whole chapters of the Scriptures. Françoise is bright and sweet: she knows that the Bible is what I am coming for, and she brings it to me at once. The parents of these children are saved, and are regular in coming to study and sing praises.

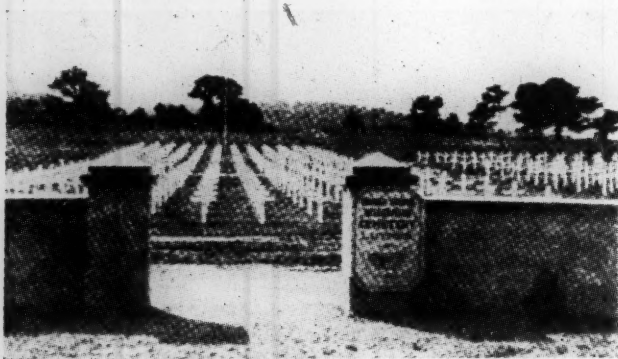
Adam is a delicate boy, son of a Jewish doctor. This little fellow said to me, when I first met him, that he had been hiding too long in the cave — he was like a faded flower. There are many fading, fainting little flowers in France. Helen, a Jewish maiden from Vienna, is born again and is radiant with joy, that even an incurable heart disease does not discourage. She is a blessing, and a greatly beloved child in the faith. We still have joy in visiting our Rabbi's family; they gather around the piano and sing the Psalms in Hebrew, and at my last visit we pondered the Scripture, the two Advents, and I prayed in His Name. Oh, that this man would confess the truth that he knows and secretly acknowledges! The story is long, for as we sow, we reap — new inquirers all the time, and such as He foreknew, for they respond so readily. The meeting face to face becomes often heart to heart with Him who saves.

Recently I visited a sanatorium, where over a hundred young girls are lying sick with tuberculosis, near the grave, war victims. In a men's sanatorium like this one, the sister in charge said that the need of linen, sheets

and men's shirts, was very great. As we passed through a ward of paralyzed men, who have to be cared for like babes, the nurse said: "We can only clean the beds twice a day, for lack of linen." The food question ever confronts poor people. If some should wish to help, let them send a gift to the American-European Fellowship for a CARE package, which can be sent to consecrated Christians, who will minister to the deepest needs.

I have a poor, dear friend, a Christian who makes me ashamed every time I see her. She contracted syphilis from the man she married, and her only girl is not normal, her husband a derelict, and there she is in her dark kitchen, always smiling, waiting. She is so much like a child in all her ways, and her favorite song is: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." We are a group of sisters who care for her barest needs, and we all love her. She is waiting for the Lord, for then her suffering ends.

We had some blessed summer days in Switzerland, at a conference at Beatenberg, where Miss Ruth Paxson was the principal speaker. What a wonderful testimony! She is her own message: life on the highest plane is lived out before us. A short trip to Denmark had its happy times of fellowship, but the spiritual needs are very great, and I felt like Daniel in the ninth chapter of the book in the Bible that bears his name—all contrition, humiliation, fasting and prayer.



AMERICAN MILITARY CEMETERY, LUYNES

"On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, The emblem of suffering and shame . . ." American mothers often write to me, asking that I plant flowers on the graves of their sons, and take pictures. What a sacred privilege, and what deep meaning it has to me! We who were living in France during the occupation,

living in fear and trembling, amidst bombing and ruins, were steadfastly looking for the Americans to come over and deliver us. "Oh, that they would come today!" was the sigh of many. And then, one day, the glad tidings sounded out through the valley, "They have come!" What a sense of joy and relief — and when the first American jeep passed through the village, I was called upon to bid them welcome, and to thank them in the name of the community. When I visit the American military cemeteries, so beautifully cared for, with their thousands of white crosses, I understand, with a strangely moved heart, the price paid for our deliverance; and in the name of all true French fathers and mothers, I thank you for your brave and noble boys, who gave their lives. And if I can render service to you in any way, dear mothers, I am ready. Outside Paris, on a hill called Calvary, three crosses have been erected in memory of four thousand young Frenchmen of the resistance movement, who were murdered in less than two days. They paid the price for our liberty — and that is the reason that we are in France today.

"I was in prison, and ye came unto me." Every open door is a great privilege; it is God's gift, for us to utilize to His glory and our eternal good. The fellowship we have had in German prison-camps is very precious. Suffering has done its work, and after prayer, we have met receptive hearts, and had the joy of seeing many saved. I now have legal permission to visit all the prison-camps and hospitals in France. What a Christmas gift! — the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised. Wherever I meet these poor Germans, they call me their mother in a strange land. Their letters are so sweet, too sacred to tell. They are calling from many quarters, wanting more of His Word, and I am going. Truly, it is my meat to do the will of Him who sent me. I had a group of condemned men — it made an indelible impression. As never before it was clear to me, that we are all condemned to death, without Christ. Two of these men are born again, and they study with great interest all we send them.

"A continual burnt-offering" . . . "They gave themselves continually to prayer" . . . "A continual feast." This could be written over the spiritual fellowship that I have had, in prayer and service, with Marlise Erhardt, a student from Beatenberg, who came to us for her two months of practical training. Although she is a college graduate, with perfect knowledge of the three main languages, used to warm rooms and nicely spread tables, yet she has shared every hardship with me. She is submissive, humble and ready. The hours that we have spent in prayer have been as the light of the morning when the sun riseth — a morning without clouds. We have kept short accounts with the Lord and with one another — confessed the least that could hinder us in seeking the Light of His countenance — and claimed His promises. It is like the fellowship we had with dear Mr. McGaw in Warsaw, so precious and so rare.

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Our earnest appeal to all who care, is for this fellowship in the Spirit, that knows no limit. The price of real prayer-warfare is costly — it must needs come from lives laid down, from kneeling on holy ground. For such needs as we have, and meet all around us, can only be supplied by God, and He works for them that wait for Him. And as all is going from bad to worse, headed for the Day of the Lord, we ask for intercession according to His Word and eternal purpose, to call out the number of His elect, and to make ready His own for the call on high.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints, and for me,"

Gratefully, your missionary in France,

TORDIS CHRISTOFFERSEN.

This is the "virtuous woman," her price "far above rubies," whom we commend, this month, to your prayers and love. Read again the thirty-first chapter of the Book of Proverbs — it presents so many parallels to our sister's loving, unselfish activity. A letter from her young fellow-worker will be printed in the next issue of THE EUROPEAN HARVEST FIELD. And the continuation of her service depends on the will of our readers, — on you, and you, and you.

Because of housing difficulties in Paris, Miss Christoffersen has taken a forwarding address in Ardèche, with a trusted friend of hers. She has asked us to print this new address: Mlle. Tordis Christoffersen, chez Mlle. Reynes, St. Péray, Ardèche, France. This is for the convenience of those who wish to correspond with her personally. We request that all gifts or gift packages be sent to our home office, as we have safe channels for forwarding them.

We Had a Clinic in Palestine

The November-December issue of THE EUROPEAN HARVEST FIELD featured the work of our missionary in Palestine, Dr. James Yuk. At that time, we were joyfully celebrating with Dr. Yuk the tenth anniversary of his founding of the American-European Fellowship Clinic there in Tel Aviv, not far from Jaffa. But the newspaper headlines grew every day more disquieting. And by the time the last issue of the magazine was in the hands of our readers, we had received the following letter from Dr. Yuk.

Tel Aviv, December 9, 1947.

Dear Dr. Smith:

I thank you heartily for your letter of November 5th. It was forwarded to me here in Palestine. I think you have already received my letters from here. But now I want to write you something altogether different. You have undoubtedly read in the newspapers about the events which are taking place here. You remember, of course, that our clinic is located on the borders between Tel Aviv and Jaffa, where in recent days actual fighting has broken out.

On the night of the 3rd to the 4th of December, I was suddenly awakened by a terrible noise. You know that I live (or, speaking more correctly, I used to live) in the clinic, and slept there, quite alone. When I awoke, it seemed to me at first that a heavy rain was falling. But this was not rain, but the noise of a great many shots, punctuated by the explosions of shells. The fight was raging right around the clinic. You can imagine that terrible feeling of being surrounded by a rain of fire. This continued all through the night, and all the following day. I was cut off from the rest of the city, and was alone in the empty clinic. I must add that the house in which the clinic was located belonged to an Arab, and that the fighters decided to blow up this house with a bomb. I, being inside the house, knew nothing of this, but I had a kind of inner feeling that something unsavory was going on. If they had been able to carry out this plan, both the house and I would have been blown to atoms.

But God, in a wonderful way, preserved my life that day. Our nurses, who at that time were in safety in the center of Tel Aviv, decided to come and see what was happening to me. When they entered the zone of combat, people sought to prevent them from going further. But nevertheless, at the risk of their lives, they penetrated through the rain of bullets to the clinic-building, and there they found out that the house was about to be blown up. They began to beg the men not to do this, and barely succeeded in persuading them. Then the nurses, together with the fighters, entered the clinic, and, thanks to them, I had the opportunity of withdrawing gradually, out of range of the firing. I was obliged to abandon the clinic itself, so to speak, to the mercy of fate. Now I am like a "displaced person," as I have no apartments of my own, and am living for the time being with a family of believers in Tel Aviv.

But even this is not all. In my absence they broke into the clinic and pillaged it. They carried away many valuable instruments and objects from the clinic, as well as my personal property. The loss may be estimated at approximately five hundred pounds. All this equipment had been gradually accumulated in the course of the past ten years. As for the things which were

left, some of the machines, cupboards, tables, etc., when the fighting had somewhat abated, we managed with difficulty to drag them to a place of safety. While we were carrying out the last of these, a fire was set near the house, and the flames soon burst through the windows. While some of us put out the fire, others loaded the furniture into a car, and meantime they kept threatening to shoot us. Our nurses worked unselfishly and fearlessly, at the risk of their lives.

Thus, unexpectedly and tragically, has come the end of our ten years of labor in the clinic on Carmel Street, between Jaffa and Tel Aviv. The Lord gave us the opportunity to be of much service both to Jews and to Arabs, both spiritually and physically. In December we had expected to celebrate the tenth anniversary of our work in this place. But the Lord has decreed otherwise.

Meanwhile, we have moved the rest of the equipment and furniture to a certain place which the authorities have given us. This is a large hall, in which we formerly used to have our evangelistic meetings (it was called "Pniel"). It had been requisitioned by the police; now they have given it back to us again, but we have to pay for it. This hall is capable of being fitted up, divided into rooms, and here we might begin anew the work of the clinic. But it is necessary to make repairs, and to obtain official permission.

To put it briefly, in order to begin our new work now in a new place, if God is willing, we need two things: first, permission from the authorities, and second, money. (Here followed a request for certain official papers, which have been sent. Dr. Yuk wrote: "Emphasize the fact that the Fellowship is an *American* organization, since everyone here is very well-disposed toward the United States at the present time.")

I also wanted to say a few words about the support of our nurses. These sisters have labored hard during the past years, with great love for the work of God. They are worthy of receiving a fixed salary, like the nurses in the medical institutions belonging to other missions. You know that they have never received anything from the Fellowship, because the small income they had from the sick has covered their few expenses (here even the porters earn more than they do). Now, when there is no longer any income from the sick, I do not know what will happen. Of myself I do not even speak. Formerly I lived in the clinic, and at least I did not have to pay for my room. Now, if I wanted to hire a room, I would have to pay a good deal for a suitable one; and furthermore, many of my personal possessions have been stolen.

Pray for us, and ask others to pray for us, that the Lord, if it be His will, may give us the opportunity to continue the work for His glory.

Yours in Him,

JAMES YUK.

"Then will I build you, and not pull you down: . . . and I will shew mercies unto you" (Jeremiah 42.10,12). God has preserved our brother's life, and for this we praise His Name. But the need is desperate. The work must be started again from the beginning. Funds must be raised for the maintenance of Dr. Yuk and of the nurses; the rent of the hall must be paid, and new equipment must be found with all possible speed. The gifts are not in hand for this. But God is able.

In the Cauldron of Russia

Life of the Rev. I. S. Prokhanoff
Sixth Installment



REV. I. S. PROKHANOFF

The vision of multitudes of the Russian people rising from the dead has always been before my spiritual sight, inspiring me with joy and ambition to labor toward the fulfillment of that great purpose.

My time in St. Petersburg was distributed as follows: The whole day, from nine to five, I was engaged in engineering work in the Westinghouse offices, and all the evenings until very late, and holidays as well, were devoted to religious work, attending meetings, preaching in the churches, writing letters, composing hymns, etc.

I decided to attempt the publishing of a hymn-book, called "Gusli" (harps), comprising hymns which were used in our secret meetings. Some of these had been composed or translated by me. But the government did not permit the publication of any religious material, unless it emanated from the State Church.

However, I went to the Director of the Printing Bureau of the Ministry of the Interior, showed him the manuscript, and asked for an estimate on the printing of twenty thousand copies. This printing establishment, although it belonged to the government, accepted outside orders. In a few days he gave me his estimate, and told me that they would secure the approval of the censors. In two or three months, the books were delivered to us. Our congregations of believers throughout the country were filled with joy on receiving them. In many cases the police sought to confiscate them, but when they discovered the government imprint on the title-page, they were simply dumbfounded. Was not all this a real miracle?

The general manager of the Westinghouse Electric Company invited me to his office one morning and informed me that the company had decided to send five engineers abroad for training in American methods, and that I was one of the group. My wife went to stay with her parents, and I left for America with my companions. My first impression of New York City was beyond any description. We visited the main places of engineering interest throughout the country. Naturally all these works produced upon us a wonderful impression of the energy of the American people. On my return I wrote a report which summed up the results of my studies and findings.

Toward the beginning of 1903, a certain nervous, agitated state of mind could be observed throughout Russia. The liberation movement began among the people. The government granted increased toleration to all religious groups, even though meetings still had to be secret.

I decided to undertake the organization of the first association of Christian young people in connection with the St. Petersburg congregation. We also began to publish a periodical especially for them.

In the celebrated Manifesto of October 17, 1905, the government proclaimed freedom of conscience, freedom of the press, of meetings, organization of societies, and of political activities. This declaration was followed by great rejoicing throughout the land, especially among the Evangelical Christians. We saw the great possibilities before us, and the evangelization work began to develop in all directions. Many exiled Christians were now legally returned to their homes.

The next clause in my program was the open publication of an Evangelical spiritual magazine, for which my former secret efforts had provided a considerable schooling. I received an official permit for issuing this magazine, which was called "The Christian." On January 1, 1906, the first number was printed. It was published continually, with an interruption caused by the Revolution and civil war, until the end of 1928, when it was stopped by the atheists.

In the city of St. Petersburg I arranged brief Gospel courses for young preachers. The lectures and studies took place in the palace of Princess Lieven, who belonged to our Evangelical Christian group. We also devoted ourselves to the publication of new hymns suitable to our work. Our music must be of such a character as to express the joy of the Gospel, a joy overwhelming and overcoming the sadness of the former Russian music, like rays of bright sunshine penetrating through a rain-cloud, like optimism dispelling pessimism. New melodies were created, and I myself wrote the words for more than six hundred new hymns.

We formed the first Evangelical Christian publishing association, and at the beginning of 1909 we held a conference which resulted in the founding of the All-Russian Evangelical Christian Union. The Union, when founded, was as a grain of mustard seed, but since that time it has grown into a mighty tree of spiritual life among the Russian people. I was elected President of the Union, an office which I held for more than twenty-two years. We began with only one missionary, but in later years we had over six hundred at work.

I was president, secretary and bookkeeper at first, though we gradually acquired a large staff of workers. On Sundays I usually preached in the large Terishevsky Hall, in the center of the city. I was still a full-time worker for the Westinghouse Company. I had far too little time for rest, but the Lord provided strength for all my needs. The daily habit of doing all things according to a written program was most valuable at this period of my life and labors.

I had also to pay special attention to my family life. I had an ideal wife and two fine boys. My wife took part in some of the women's meetings, but her highest pleasure was to be always with her boys. She accompanied them to school, she met them when they came home, she prayed with them and taught them the Bible. I planned to give them the highest possible education. They learned German in school; French and English were taught to them by specially engaged governesses. My older son also studied Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Both were later graduated from the St. Petersburg University, and became teachers in our Bible College.

My father, who was a believer, passed away in 1910. I thank God for his humbleness, gentleness and wisdom, and especially for his Christian character. My mother passed away in 1932, at the age of ninety. After the death of my father, I gave up all my hereditary rights to my youngest brother Vasily; he became a very wealthy man in the Caucasus, but he lost everything in the Revolution.

(To be continued)

Christmas in Czechoslovakia

Znojmo, Czechoslovakia, December, 1947.

Dear Prayer-helpers:

We thought perhaps you might be interested in knowing some of the customs of the Christmas season here in Czechoslovakia. Many of our customs and traditions are very old. Some of them are very nice; others have been perverted and misused. Since this is a Roman Catholic country, the observance of holidays is always made to fit in with their plans and programs. Thanksgiving commemorates the dedication of the Church, instead of giving thanks to the Father for a bountiful harvest. Each town or village has its own day for this celebration, and oftentimes there is more festivity than thanks. Some take this opportunity to go from place to place to help celebrate, and get "gloriously drunk." Those who have been saved will have no part in this celebration. With joyful hearts they thank God for redeeming them from sin and bondage.

Preparations for Christmas begin four weeks before, with the early morning "Advent" masses, and terminate on the third holy Christmas Day (December 27th), which is the day of St. John Chrysostom ("the golden-mouthed"). At that mass the devotee receives a drink of consecrated wine, to ward off diseases of the throat.

December 4th is St. Barbara's Day. On that day the maidens cut off a bit of cherry branch and place it in water. If it blooms by Christmas, the girl will marry the ensuing year; if not, she will wait another year and try it again. However, the fortunate maiden will take the blooming branch and place it in her hair, and the swain who takes it from her will be her bridegroom.

On December 6th we have the feast of St. Nicholas, where gifts of smaller kinds, and fruit, are expected.

December 24th is a great day, with everyone fasting more or less; in some cases the children are told that they will see "the Golden Piggy" if they fast. In the evening the feasts and festivities begin. Several days before Christmas, the women bake large "Christmas buns" made of sweet dough and filled with extra large raisins (though raisins and such luxuries are not available at present). These buns are woven from braids of dough, the first layer having four strands of dough, the second three, and the third two. It is quite an art to make these buns; the women take great pride in making them, and great pains to shape them well. Some of them weigh as much as ten pounds, and last for many days. The children go from door to door, singing their little songs (which they call carols), hoping for a hand-out of the delicious Christmas buns. Since the 24th is a sort of fast-day, it is customary to have fish for the main dish. The upper class may have game reserved for them instead. Of course there are nuts and sweets, perhaps some fancy dishes, like apples baked in dough, etc. The fasting is over, the great feast has begun, and continues most of the evening. The feast is ushered in by a season of prayer, intended to make an impression on the little folks.

In the homes the children are taught to believe that the angel brings in the Christmas tree. So several days before Christmas the room set aside for this purpose is closed, and secretly the tree is trimmed, and the gifts are placed around it. On Christmas Eve, when the family is gathered in anticipation of this moment, a secret messenger (perhaps a neighbor) enters the

closed room, lights the candles on the tree, and takes his leave by an outside door or window. On leaving, he rings a bell, — a sign that the tree has been delivered. Then the door to the room is swung open, and the glory of the lighted tree admired — but not for long, as each one is eager to know what the "Christ-Child" has brought him for a present. After the gifts have been received and admired, the call for supper comes. Then, after they have had their fill of the various goodies, the last round consists of nuts, fruit and sweetmeats. These are done up in little sacks, placed around the tree, and given to the children with their gifts.

When the table has been cleared, they all gather around it, and the rest of the evening is spent in card-playing and gambling. Even the children are permitted to play this time. The nuts and sweetmeats in their little sacks are used to pay off their losses. Of course the smaller children have done away with most of their goodies, having eaten them rather than lose them. To them it is a game, and not considered gambling. The playing is carried on till almost midnight. Even the children are permitted to stay up on this occasion, and together they all attend the midnight Mass. This Mass is supposed to be a repetition of the sacrifice on the Cross. The priests and congregation having all imbibed quite freely, and feasted until midnight, the spirit of frivolity rather than of spirituality and dignity pervades the atmosphere.

Our Christmas trees are decorated not so much with the balls used in the homeland, as with home-made decorations, paper chains, strings of dried prunes, apples and pears, hard candies and cookies, and then candles and popcorn. Since the war, food is very scarce. Each family receives one box of candy (one pound, rationed and bought) regardless of how many there may be in that family, so decorating a tree in the old way would be out of the question. Toys are very scarce. There are some very expensive ones, which only the rich can afford to buy. The common people will be satisfied if they can buy some necessary article of clothing as a gift. Toys and clothing are very scarce, so gifts along these lines will not be possible for many people. The singing of carols is also very different, compared with the joyful singing at home. Most of the carols are for social functions. In the church some of the famous carols are sung with a terrible whine, the old women taking the lead, an ancient custom from which they will not depart.

The political parties also take advantage of the Christmas season in order to buy votes for the next elections. The State furnishes the funds, and the various political parties have a Christmas celebration and give out gifts. There are many superstitious practices carried on during the holiday season, but time will not permit us to tell you of these, so we will try to describe the things we do in our mission during this season.

In the first place, we want you to remember that the Roman Catholic Church has a strong influence over most people in this country, and whatever functions and affairs the Church puts on are accepted and enjoyed by them. So when one is saved, these feasts and festivities are now a thing of the past. That has been the background of their life for centuries. To say good-bye to these things takes more than moral courage, it takes the grace of God. So in our mission we find it necessary sometimes to put forth special effort to hold some who might be drawn away from us, when their friends and relatives are all celebrating some feast or function of the Church. We endeavor to have a program, sometimes a tree or festive decorations: nothing elaborate. The main thing is singing, reciting of Scripture and Christmas

poems. And then we hand out little paper sacks with various goodies, home-made cookies, even some candy, made possible by the kindness of some who have remembered us with packages of various things from the homeland. Even clothing sent to us is kept for this occasion. This service is usually enjoyed by everyone, and folks who would not attend the mission at other times come to it. Sometimes there are some who have no family or friends to spend the evening with, so we invite them to join us in our home, to give them also a bit of festive spirit. This, too, would not be possible except for the generosity of those who send us something from home. On New Year's Eve we have a watch-night service with a varied program, very much as you have in the homeland.

Throughout the year we have services for the children. They have their hour of instruction, worship and song, and then they go to their work-room for their hand-work, and story-telling. Out of scraps of paper they make many pretty things, paste pictures on them, and sew around the edges. These things are kept and then stitched together in a book and given to them at Christmas-time to take home. These are prized by the children, and kept as treasured possessions. Since toys are so very scarce, Mrs. Lukesh and some of the Bible Club children are making paper gifts for the children to give to their small brothers, sisters and friends.

Our children's work, to us, is very important. If we can win them and hold them, we feel that we are sowing the seed on good soil. If we can implant the Word in their hearts, He who loved them and said, "Let the little ones come unto me," will not let His Word return unto Him void. The success of our work here lies in the lives of the children who gather with us week after week. So pray especially for Mrs. Lukesh and those who so faithfully assist her, that every effort put forth by them will be directed by Him.

In His glad service, yours,

CHARLES AND EDNA LUKESH.

The Field Is the World

During the past year, the international circulation of THE EUROPEAN HARVEST FIELD has greatly increased. It is now being sent to missionaries and friends in thirty foreign countries, as well as every state of the Union and Canada. Even more striking, however, is the array of letters reaching our desk, from all over the world. Palestine, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Austria, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia — these and many others are represented. We shall hope to give you extracts from these letters in future issues, from time to time.

But the human heart, in its sympathies, can be as wide as all the world. In our Christmas issue, we devoted the last page to an account of some special needs, lately brought to our attention. A dear friend of ours in a mid-Western state, himself ill, without means, able to give only as others give to him, sent us back his copy of this page, with these words written in the margin, "This breaks my heart" — and then enclosed a sizable gift for the meeting of the needs that had so touched him.

What is the Lord leading you to write in the margin of this page?

AMERICAN-EUROPEAN FELLOWSHIP RECEIPTS--DECEMBER 1947, JANUARY 1948
(The First National Bank in Yonkers is depository for all gifts.)

31914---\$40.00	31970----\$6.00	32026--\$382.00	32082----\$2.00
31915----2.00	31971----40.00	32027-----2.00	32083-----2.00
31916----10.00	31972----1.00	32028-----5.00	32084-----1.00
31917-----5.00	31973-----2.00	32029----10.00	32085-----5.00
31918----2.00	31974----1.00	32030----1.00	32086-----1.00
31919----10.00	31975----20.00	32031----10.00	32087-----1.00
31920----2.00	31976-----2.00	32032-----2.00	32088-----3.00
31921-----1.00	31977----10.00	32033----10.00	32089-----2.00
31922----50.00	31978--225.00	32034----25.00	32090----60.00
31923----10.00	31979-----2.00	32035-----3.00	32091-----1.00
31924-----5.00	31980----35.00	32036-----5.00	32092-----5.00
31925----10.00	31981-----5.00	32037----10.00	32093-----1.00
31926----50.00	31982-----5.00	32038----10.00	32094----10.00
31927-----5.00	31983----10.00	32039----10.00	32095-----2.00
31928----10.00	31984----25.00	32040----18.00	32096-----1.00
31929-----1.00	31985----70.00	32041-----2.00	32097----10.00
31930-----90.00	31986----45.00	32042-----1.00	32098-----5.00
31931----20.00	31987-----5.00	32043-----16.00	32099----10.00
31932----25.00	31988-----2.00	32044-----2.00	32100-----2.00
31933-----2.00	31989----10.00	32045-----3.00	32101-----2.00
31934-----1.00	31990----80.00	32046-----2.00	32102-----5.00
31935----10.00	31991----15.00	32047----10.00	32103-----3.00
31936----50.00	31992-----5.00	32048----75.00	32104----10.00
31937----28.00	31993----10.00	32049-----5.00	32105----15.00
31938-----2.00	31994----45.00	32050----15.00	32106----25.00
31939----100.00	31995----10.00	32051----10.00	32107-----2.00
31940----50.00	31996----10.00	32052-----5.00	32108-----2.00
31941-----2.00	31997----60.00	32053----10.00	32109-----5.00
31942-----1.00	31998----50.00	32054-----1.00	32110----10.00
31943----100.00	31999-----5.00	32055-----1.50	32111----35.00
31944-----2.00	32000----10.00	32056-----2.00	32112-----2.00
31945-----1.00	32001----15.22	32057-----2.50	32113-----1.00
31946----10.00	32002-----5.00	32058----10.00	32114----10.00
31947----10.00	32003----50.00	32059-----3.00	32115----10.00
31948----100.00	32004----10.00	32060-----5.00	32116-----5.00
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31954----20.00	32010----10.00	32066----50.00	32122----50.00
31955----10.00	32011----7.00	32067-----6.00	32123-----5.00
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31958----100.00	32014----10.00	32070-----5.00	32126----50.00
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31962-----5.00	32018----75.00	32074-----3.00	32130----10.00
31963----10.00	32019-----5.00	32075-----1.00	32131-----5.00
31964-----4.00	32020----3.00	32076-----2.00	32132-----5.00
31965----25.00	32021-----5.00	32077-----2.00	32133----25.00
31966----18.00	32022----30.00	32078----10.00	32134----11.00
31967----20.00	32023-----2.00	32079----25.00	32135-----5.00
31968----10.00	32024-----5.00	32080-----5.00	32136-----1.00
31969-----2.00	32025-----6.00	32081-----1.00	